

With R. L. Hutchinson's Compl't

Haslemere

July 1920.

Haslemere

Survey

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health.

for the year 1919.

To the Urban District Council of Haslemere.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

April 1920.

In presenting my Seventh Annual Report for the year 1919, I would wish to thank Dr. Frakes for kindly carrying on my work as M.O.H., while I was away on War Service from May 1918 to June 30th, 1919.

The year does not present many points of interest. Mr. Clark, our new Sanitary Inspector, took up office in June 1919. The Housing question has been very prominent; an election fought on this question returned all candidates pledged to increased housing accommodation; and although so far no building has been begun, the scheme for erecting 54 new houses for the working class is well advanced.

The General Health for the year has been good; and very definite relief is felt in health conditions since the break up of the Military Camps, which led to much overcrowding and considerable venereal disease as well as other infectious troubles inevitable under the conditions.

A large Public Recreation Ground of eight acres has been offered to the town as a War Memorial, and this should prove an important factor in the health of the Community. This offer has been accepted by the Council.

Natural and Social Conditions.

The District comprises an area of about 2,263 acres, and is situated on the top of two Watersheds draining to the West into the Thames by the Wey River, and to the East into the Arun. The District is hilly, varying from 750 feet above sea level on the North and South, to 420 on the South West, and 375 on the North East. The soil varies from Lower Green Sand in the higher parts to clay in the valley.

The District is mainly residential. The contour of it makes it impossible to drain the whole by one fall, and entails two systems of drainage, the larger taking the drainage of Haslemere proper was made in 1899, and the smaller taking

that of Grayswood in 1908. Both are by Bacterial Tanks and percolating filters.

The population was in the Census of 1911 returns 3,540, and may be fairly estimated in 1919 at 4,000.

Rainfall.— The average rainfall is 35.5 inches. The summer of 1919 had an excess of sunshine, and was prolonged and warm after a cold and snowy winter. The rainfall for 1919 was 37.49. The bright sunshine recorded at Hindhead was 1,640 hours.

Sanitary Circumstances.

Water Supply.—The Main Supply is from the Watershed on Blackdown, the water being stored in two concrete reservoirs holding 500,000 gallons, enough for about eight days normal consumption. The water is pumped up from headings, and flows into the well at an average rate of 3,500 gallons per hour. With the growth of the town increasing difficulty has been found to secure an adequate supply; and it has been found necessary during the year to supplement it by supplies from the Wey Valley Company. There is a secondary private supply to the houses on the Half Moon Estate. This supply is ample, and analyses taken of it in the past few years have shown "a good supply for all dietetic purposes."

Drainage and Sewerage.—Owing to the good work done by Mr. Whitcher, our Clerk and Acting Surveyor for the last three years in the absence of our late Surveyor at the front, under the guidance of the Chairman, the conditions of the Sewerage Disposal Works has been greatly improved; and a high degree of purification can be obtained and maintained. A third percolating filter and a second humus tank were completed in August at a cost of £1,315. Since this time although monthly samples of the effluent have been taken by the Thames Conservancy Inspector, no complaints have been received.

Separate tanks are provided to deal with the storm water; and other work is constantly in progress to increase the efficiency of the works and provide for the near addition to the number of houses in the town.

The Grayswood Works are under less stress, and do their work satisfactorily.

Closest Accommodation.—During the year pressure has been brought to bear on all owners of privies and earth closets, to connect with the main drain where possible and a total of 23 pail closets and 5 privies have been converted into w.c.'s.

Scavenging.—House refuse is mainly collected by the Council's carts; which also supply sifted dry ashes to the earth closets every week. This house refuse is tipped and burnt in the No. 3 Field of the Sewerage Works. During the year 650 loads (about 1,200 tons) of refuse have been so collected.

The number of cesspools and privies visited during the year has been 81, and the number of pail closets 221. The latter are emptied twice a week, and from cesspools three loads are removed every three months.

In 1914 the numbers were respectively 125 and 288.

Moveable sanitary dustbins are used at all houses.

Sanitary Inspection of District.—There are no common lodging houses in the District and no offensive trades.

During the year 103 inspections of houses were made. Sixty-one defects or nuisances were discovered, and as a result of recommendations 59 of these were remedied.

Schools.

The two public schools in the district are Church of England Schools. The Mixed School has accommodation for 300 scholars with an average of 100 on books (girls, 148; boys, 142). The Infants School has accommodation for 123 scholars, with an average of 70 on books (girls, ; boys,). In both schools the class-rooms are grouped round a central hall, and are commodious, lofty and well lit, warmed and ventilated.

The schools were closed early in December owing to an outbreak of diphtheria, and re-opened at the usual date in January, 1920, when the epidemic appeared to have stopped. There was a recrudescence of two cases on re-opening, but no more followed, and it was not thought necessary to close again. There has been for many years an almost entire absence of ringworm in the school; and although scabies appeared in several children during the overcrowded condition of the town while the Military camps were full, it seems to have disappeared again.

Food.

Milk Supply.—Eighteen inspections of cowsheds and dairies were made, and one defect discovered is not yet remedied.

Nine inspections of slaughter houses were made, and were found in all cases in good order.

Other Foods.—Analyses have been made by the County Analyst in 39 cases. Of these, six were found adulterated or deteriorated, and prosecutions followed in two instances.

Infectious Diseases.

All cases of infectious diseases are, when necessary, sent to the Farnham Isolation Hospital under a special arrangement.

Disinfection of premises is carried out by contract under the supervision of myself and the Inspector. The system adopted is vaporised formaldehyde.

During the year nineteen cases of infectious disease were notified as follows:—

Tuberculosis	4
Malaria	1
Pneumonia	3
Puerperal	1
Septicaemia	
Scarlet Fever	1
Erysipelas	1
Dysentery	1
Diphtheria	7

The small epidemic of diphtheria was noteworthy in that the cases were of all ages from 2 to 10 years; living in widely different parts of the town, and in only one instance could personal contact with another case be proved. Sore throats were very prevalent at the time. All the cases were treated at once by antitoxin, and all verified by bacteriological evidence and there were no deaths. A considerable number of negative examinations were made on other children and adults.

A wave of catarrhal influenza passed over the town in March with many cases of very severe illness. Seven deaths were directly attributed to it, and others indirectly.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Centre is carried on jointly with Shottermill every Thursday afternoon at St. Christopher's Hall, and is undoubtedly growing very popular with the mothers, and is doing excellent teaching work. The County nurse (Miss Arrow-smith) is, in spite of her very large district, untiring and doing admirable work, she visits every case of childbirth where help is acceptable and it is a healthy sign that the initial prejudice felt at first has now practically disappeared, and these visits are always welcomed.

No cases of ophthalmia neonatorum have occurred. The number of deaths under one year (ten) is regrettably high, as are the illegitimate births (seven), the latter the aftermath of war.

Health Visitor's Report, 1919.

	First Attendances	Subsequent Attendances
Ante-Natal Consultations	5	7
Infants under 12 months	47	295
Children between 1 and 5 years	31	155

	First Visits	Subsequent Visits
Visits to Infants under 12 months	67	211
„ „ Children between 1 and 5	3	245
„ „ Expectant Mothers	24	—

M. ARROWSMITH,
Assoc. Roy. San. Inst.

May 4th, 1920.

Sanitary Administration.

Infectious cases are treated at Farnham Isolation Hospital. Seven cases in all were treated.

Bacteriological work is entrusted to the Clinical Research Association.

Housing.

The total number of houses is 862. The houses whose value in the Poor Rate is below £16. is 509.

Three new houses have been built, there being also 59 plans approved of miscellaneous buildings or additions.

Population.—Approximately 4,000. There is still a great demand for cottages, and cases have come across my notice where couples are delaying getting married because there is no house available. There is never a cottage to let in the town.

Overcrowding is not noticeable to any serious extent; and as already pointed out better than when many houses let rooms to relations of those in the camps; but undoubtedly the 54 cottages to be erected shortly under the new Council Scheme will be occupied as fast as erected, in the main by employees at present unsuitably housed or living in other parishes. During the year 54 houses have been inspected and one closing order issued.

Vital Statistics.

The population for calculating birth rate is 3,878, and that for death rate 3,723.

There was a total of 48 deaths, 20 men and 28 women, giving a death rate of 12.8 per 1,000.

The total births were 64.

Males.	Legitimate	33	Total	37
	Illegitimate	4		
Females.	Legitimate	24	Total	27
	Illegitimate	3		

This gives a Birth Rate of 16.5 per 1,000.

Of deaths under one year there were four males and six females, two of the latter illegitimate

The Birth Rate for 1919 for the total population for England and Wales was 18.5, and the death rate 13.8.

Of causes of death :—

7	died of	Influenza
2	"	Tuberculosis of lungs
2	"	Other Tuberculosis
6	"	Cancer
1	"	Meningitis
5	"	Organic Heart Disease
3	"	Pneumonia and Bronchitis
3	"	Brights Disease
5	"	Congenital Debility